

Classroom News

June 2022

Monthly Theme Reflection

By: Ashley Cole

Hello everyone,

This month we explore all the Unitarian Universalism sources together. The final theme to this year's exploration of the sources is an opportunity to take a broader look at the sources as a whole and how they each weave into a story about ourselves and our tradition.

Perhaps there are many who come to Unitarian Universalist services week after week who may not even be aware of the sources that inspired this tradition, and yet they are inspired by the expressions of those sources regardless.

Having explored the sources for yourself over the past year, what is it that you have learned? Which sources felt true for you? Were there any that didn't? When it came to the wild card and creativity months what did you learn about yourself and what inspires your ongoing participation in Unitarian Universalism?

What ever it is you take away from your exploration, I hope you know that Unitarian Universalism is a community you can rely on and engage with in what ever ways feel right for you.

June Theme - alternative UU Sources

Our Unitarian Universalist beliefs come from all of our sources!

Head

Story time Have someone in your family read the attached reflection *Six Sources Water Meditation* while following the meditation instructions. After you read it discuss with your family what you thought of the meditation. Were there any other sources (or creeks) you would have added? How do you think the sources of Unitarian Universalism shape the tradition we practice today? Do you see any of these sources present in the songs and services you participate in?

Heart

Colour in the attached drawing and reflect on how each flower in the vase has its own unique features and beauty to offer, and how being gathered together into a bouquet enhances all the flowers and transforms them from being individual stems into something new. Do you think that is true of the sources as well?

If you practice lighting a chalice, use these words by Josh, Prudence, & Percival Robern
We are all flames.

*When we gather hand in hand,
our church, our community, our home
We inspire
We celebrate
We come together
Sharing our light of hope for our shared future.*

Hands

Sing about the sources! Try singing the attached song, if you want to hear how the song sounds you can hear an audio clip here <http://smallscreen.uua.org/videos/before-you-start-for-love-will-guide-us>. What is your favourite part of the song? What are your favourite sources?

Six Sources Water Mediation and Story

Amanda Uluhan

First, I'd like to ask if you can find a cold glass of water. If you go and get one now, you'll be able to follow along as I share this interactive.

In our programs at East Shore, we explore Unitarian Universalist traditions and religion so that we can help each other learn and grow, and search for what is true in this world. Sometimes it's really difficult to figure out what is right and wrong, or to understand why we feel and think certain things, or to get answers to questions that we're really curious about like "who are we" and "how do we make a difference in this world" and "how does it all fit together."

Exploring those questions together is some of the fun and freedom that this faith, Unitarian Universalism, gives to us. In Unitarian Universalism, we haven't been given a map for how to live our lives. Instead, Unitarian Universalism gives us things that can help us along the way.

Those things are our principles, and covenants, and songs, and chalice readings, we also have our six sources. They all work together to help us in our lives.

Last week, in the offline activity packet for Recharge ESUC I shared a story about storing up potential energy, and about one of our six sources of

wisdom and knowledge: science. This week, I wanted to talk more about those six sources of wisdom and knowledge.

The sources are the places that we can go to again and again to help us in understanding ourselves and the world around us.

Now is when you'll need your cold glass of water. If you want to close your eyes, you can follow along and imagine in your mind what I'm going to describe next.

You're in the mountains. It's a hot day like today, but you're safe from any of the fires. You're right next to a cold creek. That is our first source. You can peer over the edge of the creek bank and look at yourself in the water. Our first thing that we value and learn from is our own direct experience. Can you imagine yourself splashing around that cold mountain water, washing your face, and taking a gulp? Take a sip from your cold glass of water and feel the sensations in your body as the water goes down your throat and into your belly. Your body, your mind, your emotions, and your spirit are all an amazing and infinite source of wisdom and knowledge.

Now we walk from our first creek, to a fork where we find our second one, and at our second mountain creek we find a second source of wisdom, and that is from other people in the world, some that are alive today, and others that used to be alive. Imagine some people you admire, like your best friend, your mother, your teacher, your neighbor. Imagine your favorite

author, actor singer, sports player, or comedian. Imagine someone from history that you really look up to. These are the people that help to teach us and understand more about ourselves and the world around us. Take another sip from your cold glass of water and thank all of the people in your mind's eye.

We walk again to another fork, where the first two streams meet and join a third and a fourth, already flowering together. These are our third and fourth sources, this is where we find other world religions. Since time immemorial, people have gathered in community searching for what is true and right, searching for ways to make sense of the world around them, to put together the mysteries and puzzles of life, to understand their environment, and to understand what is impossible to understand. Still, we try. When people gather with these questions, and create shared bonds and beliefs systems, those become religions. Sometimes people write down those beliefs into sacred books, like the Quran, the Bible, the Torah, the Bhagavad Gita, the Tripitaka. Can you imagine looking through these sacred texts, or hearing the words of the leaders and prophets of these religions? Take another sip from your cold glass of water as you imagine what they might say and what that ancient wisdom might offer us now.

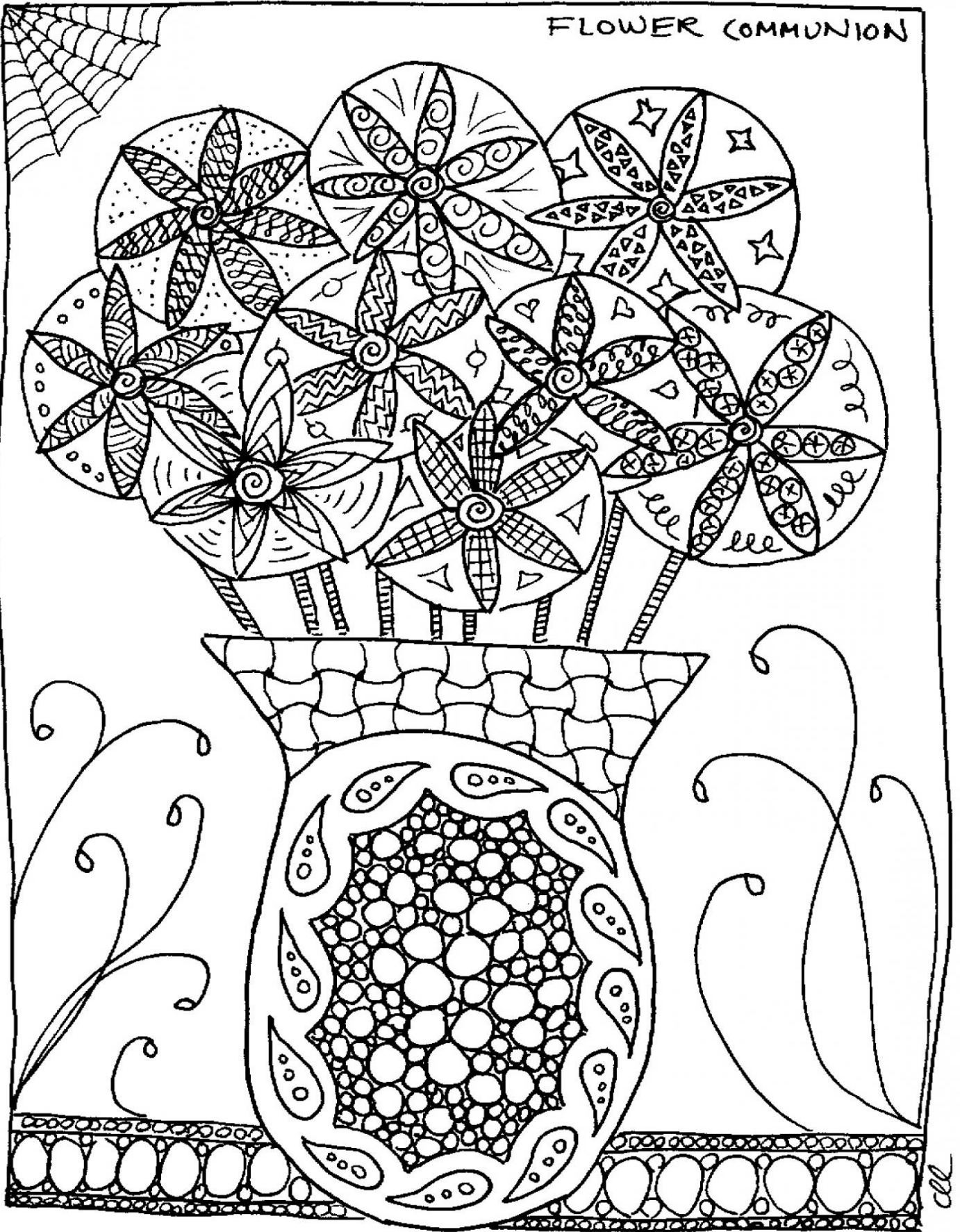
We stand up from this creek, it's looking larger, as four sources are merged, and we go to our next creek. Here we find scientific and humanist teachings and beliefs. These teachings help us to understand the interdependent web of life and humans place within it. We look at scientific

discoveries and scientists and how they have helped us with their wisdom and knowledge. Did you know that 71% of the Earth is water? And humans are made up of nearly 60% water? Now that's interdependent! Take a sip from your cold glass of water. Stay hydrated!

This brings us to our last creek source, feeding into our river of wisdom and knowledge. Our final source is the Earth and life itself. Scientific teachings are one way that we can understand life on Earth and beyond. There are other ways that we can understand the components that make up life and the natural world, like earth-based religions and traditional environmental knowledge of first peoples. In fact, this sixth source brings us full circle back to our original source, ourselves.

As you take another sip of water, imagine this large mountain river that you are now standing in front of, all of the six streams meet. This large river of our six sources, this earth, your experience directly in it, quench your thirst for curiosity, give thanks for the abundance of the earth, for the wisdom and the knowledge of water and these six streams, and for the courage and patience to help care for and protect these sources of life and well-being.

FLOWER COMMUNION



Tapestry of Faith (<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry>) : **Love Will Guide Us**

(<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide>) : **A Program for Grades 2-3 that Applies the Wisdom of the Six Sources to the Big Questions**

Handout 3: Our Sources Lyrics

Part of Love Will Guide Us (<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide>)

By Kathleen Tracy (<https://www.uua.org/offices/people/kathleen-tracy>)

Hear the music clip (<http://smallscreen.uua.org/videos/before-you-start-for-love-will-guide-us>) of Kathleen Tracy sing the song. The Music (PDF)

(https://www.uua.org/files/documents/lfd/our_sources.pdf) can be found here. (NOTE: The PDF will not load into the downloaded word version of the curriculum - you'll need to download it separately.)

The sense of wonder we all share (*Direct experience*)

Lives that remind us to be kind and fair (*Deeds of wise people*)

Like starlight beacons in the night

They point the way to love

Wisdom from teachers all over the world (*World religions*)

Love that reaches out to others in turn (*Jewish and Christian teachings*)

Like starlight beacons in the night

They point the way to love

(*BRIDGE*)

O shine down mystery

The path may be different for you and me

Let's walk together as we learn and grow

And sing about the things we know

We can use our minds to see what's true (*Humanist teachings*)

And feel the circle of life we're connected to (*Earth-based teachings*)

These are things that we believe

And they point the way to love

These are things that we believe

And they point the way to love

(Words and music by Kathleen Tracy.)

PREVIOUS: Handout 2: Love Will Guide Us
Lyrics

(<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide/session1/168163.shtml>)

UP: Session 1: Love Is Like a
Seed

(<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide/session1>)

NEXT: Leader Resource 1: The North
Star

(<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide/session1/168168.shtml>)

Download all of Love Will Guide Us (Word) (https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/loveguideus_column.doc) (PDF (https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/loveguideus_column.pdf)) to edit or print.

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